(c) whether it is a fact that Government agreed to release ten jailed militants, including Babar Badr, former Chief of Muslim Janbaz Force, now AL-Jehad, for securing the release of two IB officials abducted in June, 1993;

(d) if so, what are the details of the 'deal' and particulars of the militants/terrorists released: and

(e) whether any 'deal' on the same lines is being considered for the kidnapped Bihar Legislator, Shri P. K. Sinha ?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI S. B. CHAVAN): (a) and (b) As per information readily available with the Central Govermment, 359 persons were kidnapped/ abducted during the period of which 171 are reported to have been released.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

136. *[Thmsferred to 6th August, 1993.]*

Amendment to the Law relating to Rape

*137. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA Will

the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the National Commission for Women has suggested major changes in various penal laws to increase the punishment for rape and to widen the scope of legal definition of sexual assault which at present is very limited;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have accepted the suggestions of the Commission and propose to amend the law relating to rape in near future; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI S. B. CHAVAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Proposal to Set up Southern Gas Grid

138. SHRI S. MUTHU MANI
SHRI PASUMPON THA RUTTINAN :

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to set up Southern Gas Grid for supply of gas to Southern States from Bombay High;

(b) whether any proposal to this effect has been received from the Chief Ministers of Southern States;

(c) if so, what action has been initiated by Government to implement the above project;

(d) what is the likely cost of this project; and

(e) what are the States likely to be covered by the said project ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH SHARMA): (a) to (e) Requests received from the Southren States for a Gas Grid have been examined by Government. The concept of laying a gas pipeline from the Western Offshore to the Southern region has been approved in principle. The proposal envisages the use of surplus gas from the Western Offshore. This is also proposed to be supplemented by imported LNG and possibly pipeline imports of natural gas from the Middle East. The proposed grid will benefit the Southren States.

PAKISTAN'S ATTEMPT TO INVOLVE ISLAMIC COUNTRIES IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF INDIA

*139. SHRI SURESH KALMADI
SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL :Will

the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Pakistan has been attempting to involve other Islamic countries in the internal affairs of India by raking up the Kashmir issue;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the communique issued after the special Ministerial meeting of the Organisation of Islamic Conference in Islamabad of June 12 and 13th, 1993 had made references to Kashmir; and

(c) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?